

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1504

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PO US

SUBJ: US APPROACH TO GOP RE PORTUGAL'S AFRICAN POLICIES

REF: STATE 072345

SUMMARY: WE HAVE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO DEPARTMENT'S BELIEF THAT ENDORSEMENT OF SPINOLA'S IDEAS SHOULD BE AVOIDED BY EMBASSY OFFICERS IN PERSONAL CONTACTS. WE FEEL THAT DEPT MAY WISH TO RECONSIDER THIS POSITION IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS. END SUMMARY

1. A SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION IN PORTUGAL TODAY WHICH DOES NOT INVOLVE THE SPINOLA BOOK IS RARE INDEED. IT IS THEREFORE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THAT EMBOFFS CAN AVOID THE TOPIC IN CONVERSATIONS, PARTICULARLY WITH CLOSE CONTACTS DEVELOPED, AT CONSIDERABLE EFFORT, TO THE LEVEL OF EXCHANGES OF CONFIDENCES. WE HAVE THE OPTIONS OF COMMENTING POSITIVELY ON THE SPINOLA PROPOSALS, COMMENTING NEGATIVELY OR REMAINING SILENT. WE OF COURSE ASSUME THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD RULE OUT NEGATIVE COMMENT. HOWEVER, AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF OUR LONG-STANDING ADVOCACY OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PORTUGUESE AFRICA, SILENCE BY US REPRESENTS AN ELOQUENTLY NEGATIVE COMMENT, CONVEYING BOTH TO THE RIGHTIST ESTABLISHMENT AND THE LIBERAL CENTER THE MESSAGE THAT OUR DEVOTION TO SELF-DETERMINATION HAS ERODED. TO THE EXTENT THAT ADOPTION OF A POSITION ON THE SPINOLA BOOK REPRESENTS INTERVENTION IN PORTUGUESE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, THEREFORE, EITHER COMMENT OR ABSTENTION FROM COMMENT REPRESENTS SUCH INTERVENTION.

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2. IF ONE ACCEPTS THE OFFICIAL GOP FICTION THAT PORTUGUESE AFRICA IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF PORTUGAL, WE HAVE IN FACT BEEN INTERVENING IN PORTUGUESE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS FOR AT LEAST THE LAST THIRTEEN YEARS BY OUR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADVOCACY OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PORTUGUESE AFRICA. IN FACT, HOWEVER, TACITLY OR OTHERWISE, THE PORTUGUESE HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED OUR RIGHT TO DIFFER WITH THEM ON THIS POINT. THE FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF HAS STATED TO US THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT US TO ABANDON OUR STAND ON SELF-DETERMINATION, WHATEVER ELSE HE EXPECTS OF US.

3. THE FORMULATION WE HAVE USED IN PAST COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK HAS STARTED WITH A DISCLAIMER OF ANY INTENTION TO INTERFERE IN ANY WAY IN PORTUGAL'S CURRENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONTROVERSY. WE HAVE THEN PROCEEDED TO OBSERVE THAT ADOPTION BY PORTUGAL OF A FORMULA FOR THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN PROVINCES SIMILAR TO THAT PROPOSED BY SPINOLA, IN HIS EMPHASIS ON OBTAINING THE DEMONSTRATED SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY FOR ANY PROPOSED SOLUTION, WOULD MAKE IT MUCH EASIER FOR THE US AND OTHERS TO DEFEND PORTUGAL IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT PORTUGUESE WE HAVE TALKED TO IN THIS VEIN HAVE NOT CONSIDERED SUCH COMMENTARY, CONCENTRATING AS IT DOES ON THE OVERSEAS ASPECTS OF THE SPINOLA BOOK AND THE INTERNATIONAL ADVANTAGES FOR PORTUGAL'S FRIENDS OF ADOPTION OF SOME OF HIS IDEAS, AS INTERFERENCE IN THE CURRENT PORTUGUESE DOMESTIC CRISIS.

4. FOR YEARS WE HAVE BEEN TELLING AFRICA, OUR ALLIES AND INTERESTED AMERICANS (ESPECIALLY IN CONGRESS) THAT OUR POSITION ON SELF-DETERMINATION HAS BEEN REITERATED TO THE GOP ON APPROPRIATE OCCASIONS. IN FACT, THOSE OCCASIONS HAVE BEEN FEW AND FAR BETWEEN, AND IN ORDER TO BE HEARD OUT, THE CLOSEST WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET TO ADVOCACY OF SELF-DETERMINATION HAS BEEN TO ENCOURAGE THE PORTUGUESE TO MAKE THEIR STATED MULTI-RACIAL POLICY MORE OF A REALITY AND, SPECIFICALLY, TO PROVIDE A MUCH GREATER ROLE FOR AFRICANS IN THE ADMINISTRATION, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY OF THE TERRITORIES THEY INHABIT. NOW APPEARS THE SPINOLA BOOK, IN EFFECT ADVOCATING SELF-DETERMINATION, WRITTEN NOT BY A MARIO SOARES OR A SOAPY WILLIAMS BUT BY A TOP PORTUGUESE MILITARY LEADER AND HERO FROM WITHIN THE ESTABLISHMENT WITH A SOLIDLY RIGHTIST, EVEN FASCIST PAST. EVEN IF SPINOLA COULD BE AT LEAST PARTIALLY FAULTED FOR AMBITION AND FLAMBOYANCE, HIS IDEAS COULD NOT BE DISCOUNTED OR IGNORED ONCE THERE WERE GIVEN POWERFUL SUPPORT BY THE COUNTRY'S TOP MILITARY LEADER, COSTA GOMES, WHOSE INTEGRITY IS NOT OPEN TO QUESTION. FOR THE US TO WITHHOLD AT LEAST PARTIAL AND

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PRIVATE ENDORSEMENT OF SPINOLA'S IDEAS WOULD BE TO DENY OURSELVES THE USE OF ARGUMENTATION HAVING IMPECCABLE PORTUGUESE CREDENTIALS WHICH SUPPORTS OUR LONG-HELD POLICY.

5. WITH THE FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, WE URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO RECONSIDER THE POSITION OUTLINED IN PARA 2 REFTEL AND TO ENDORSE OUR USE IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS OF THE FORMULATION SET FORTH IN PARA 3 ABOVE.

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